DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 362 166 IR 016 322

AUTHOR Gueulette, David G.
TITLE International Training Research Project Culturefax.
PUB DATE Jan 93
NOTE 9p.; In: Proceedings of Selected Research and Development Presentations at the Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology Sponsored by the Research and Theory Division (15th, New Orleans, Louisiana, January 13-17, 1993); see IR 016 300.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bulletins; *Cultural Awareness; Curriculum Development; Educational Theories; Ethnic Groups; *Facsimile Transmission; *Filipino Americans; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Immigrants; *Instructional Design; Minority Groups; *Multicultural Education; Newsletters; Study Habits; Training
IDENTIFIERS *Culturefax; Northern Illinois University

ABSTRACT

Researchers at Northern Illinois University have begun to compile findings from a study investigating the most critical audience factors impacting the design and delivery of instruction for international learners in higher education settings in the United States. The findings are being incorporated into small bulletins called "Culturefax" that are being distributed via fax machines to higher education institutions and other interested parties. These bulletins note special cultural factors that may help instructors become more culturally sensitive and more effective in multicultural classrooms. Key theoretical considerations of the research are reviewed. A sample "Culturefax" for Filipinos is included. The bulletin lists characteristics of the Filipino learner and includes information on typical work habits and practices. (Contains 21 references.) (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 362 166

Title:

International Training Research Project Culturefax

Author:

David G. Gueulette

IR016322

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Michael Simonson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

In the Spring of 1990, a team of researchers at Northern Illinois University began to compile findings from a study investigating the most critical audience factors impacting the design and delivery of instruction for international learners in higher education settings in the United States.

Results of early findings provided a direction for additional inquiry that is still continuing on the problems and challenges that face both learners from other cultures and their U.S. instructors in university environments.

Findings are being incorporated in small bulletins called "Culturefax" that are being distributed to higher education institutions and other interested parties. These bulletins note special cultural factors that may prompt U.S. instructors to become more sensitive and more effective in multicultural classrooms. These bulletins highlight, for example, if a certain nationality is generally more comfortable in group or team learning activities or in more individualized programs.

Other findings that have been useful in developing the highlights have been: the presentation style and even dress of the instructor, mediated materials preferences, personal treatment of the learners, use of glossaries to supplement existing texts for learners with language handicaps, timing and pace of instruction, and a dozen other factors.

It is important to discuss the findings of the studies and to review the methodologies. The researchers want to know the strengths and weaknesses of the techniques and usefulness of the results. The study and findings have been examined in some detail and comments on the procedures invited from the participants in several professional presentations.

The connection between the findings and the development of the bulletins have been incorporated in revised bulletins and recommendations from all the audiences will be considered for possible revision to continuing research and publication of the "Culturefax".

"Culturefax" is continuously reviewed with the intent of incorporating the audience critique in subsequent publications. Those who are critiquing the bulletins have a multicultural educational background and act as consultants to this project. It is hoped that this will be a multicultural and interactive activity that will provide a arena for the researchers and the participants to actively continue the research process and thus play a major role in the revision and reshaping of the final publications. This process suggests a robust means of validating the research, the bulletins and subsequent multicultural instructional techniques.

Sample handouts that capture the research and examples of the multicultural instructional bulletins are provided, and cover such themes as:

1. Platform skills in the multicultural education setting
2. Selection of appropriate media
3. Pacing and timing of instruction
4. Treatment of learners
5. Special cultural factors or religious, political or social considerations
6. Instruction in English factors
7. Subject matter issues
8. Classroom environments.

Subsequent reviews will focus on summarizing revisions and recommendations for adjusting the on-going research and on considering suggestions for improving the format of "Culturefax".

ORIGINATION OF THE THEORY OF CROSSCULTURAL INSTRUCTION

Key theoretical constructs that generated the research were suggested by the work of Philip R. Harris and Robert T. Moran and reported in a book entitled: *Managing Cultural Differences: High-Performance Strategies for Today's Global Manager*, 2nd Edition, 1987. Gulf Publishing Company. (ISBN 0-87201-161-5).

In the text, the authors posited several categories of cultural conditions that can impact learning by adult internationals in U.S. classrooms. These became the general areas of inquiry that the study attempted to address.

The conditions are as follows:

SENSE OF SELF AND SPACE

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

FOOD AND EATING

TIME

RELATIONSHIPS

VALUES AND NORMS

BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES

MENTAL PROCESS AND LEARNING

WORK HABITS

Additionally, Harris and Moran stated that the cultural impact on learning could be further refined to cover educational sub-heads:

TEACHER PERCEPTION

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

CLASSROOM ATTITUDES OR BEHAVIOR

PERSONAL VALUES

OTHER

These categories and subheads were analyzed and formed into statements that could by tested for specific cultural groups. The initial intent was to clarify these statements to determine if they would generate responses that could be developed into hypotheses. The final outcomes would not be facts, findings or generalizations but rather testable statements derived from the collection of answers.

The categories and subheads were presented to representative international students at

Northern Illinois University and the responses tabulated and condensed to form the hypotheses.

This approach was also recommended in a dissertation by Dr. Jeanne Hites entitled: *Design and Delivery of Instruction for International Trainees: a Case Study*, Northern Illinois University, Spring, 1990. Dr. Hites suggested the development of testable statements for A.T. & T. instructors who were involved in the teaching of technical switching systems. She also employed a process termed: "triangulation" to confirm that the statements from international respondents were as valid as possible.

So, using "triangulation" that included student comments, previous instructors' comments and any written or anecdotal data available, she generated hypotheses that could be tested by in-service instructors at A.T.&T. This puts research on international teaching/learning at the appropriate and most relevant level: the classroom; and, provides the investigator with very reliable and valuable hypotheses that can be tested and possibly subsequently lead to improved classroom instruction and learning. It also attempts to avoid the so-called, "Margaret Mead" error of generalizing too extensively from respondents without other types of corroborating evidence.

This "triangulation" method using students as respondents, instructors as informants and written or anecdotal information in support of each statement or hypothesis was utilized in this study. As mentioned earlier, the statements have been put into bulletins entitled "Culturefax", and will be provided as requested to interested instructors, instructional designers and others.

Currently three cultural/national audiences have been examined and pilot "Culturefax" bulletins produced. These are: Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. In addition to the printed bulletins a "LINKWAY", that is IBM interactive instructional program, is available for the Philippine's version of "Culturefax". Future interactive programs are being developed for several other "Culturefax" as well. In summary for publication this Spring are: Malaysia, People's Republic of China, and Kenya. Later bulletins will cover: Taiwan, South Africa and Egypt.

The initial audiences were selected as a function of being the predominant nationalities served by the faculty of Instructional Technology at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois.

Plans included distribution to other units in the university and to the public at large for a small fee to cover printing, handling and mailing. Additionally, research on other specific audiences will be undertaken on request and workshops on preparing U.S. instructors for the international classroom provided by contract.

The following sample of the Philippine (Filipino) "Culturefax" provides a good example of the results of this international learner study.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FILIPINO CLASSROOM

1. **Expect to be treated with "regard and respect".**

2. **Don't rely on instruction based on argumentation.**

3. **Be polite and somewhat formal.**

4. **Provide learning activities that focus on reading and writing but expect fairly fluent spoken English with some accents.**

5. **Avoid intense or "heavy" discussions.**

6. **Keep changes, confrontations and disturbances to a minimum.**

7. **Give recognition, incentives and encouragement whenever possible.**

8. **Relate to the student in a "warm and personal" way.**

9. **Use lecture and rather direct instruction.**

10. **Test with essay and objective techniques.**

USING "CULTUREFAX"

Recommendations for the classroom are drawn from comments and observations by respective international students and their U.S. instructor as well as reports from other documentation. This does not guarantee that they are appropriate in all cases. The data that support the recommendations are valuable but subject to errors that accompany any research that relies heavily on informants and interpretations.

Use the recommendations as experiments. Consider the recommendations as classroom hypotheses that you can confirm or refute for your specific teaching environment. You are the best evaluator of these suggestions for your learners. If you find that the points are not useful to you, disregard them and write to us and tell us your findings. It is important to provide the most effective and current recommendations possible. Your observations will play a part in updating and revising future "culturefax". Thank you for your help.

OTHER FACTORS THAT DEFINE THE FILIPINO LEARNER

Teacher Perception

Filipino students respect authority. Instructors are considered authority figures in their respective fields. Students look up to teachers with high regard and respect. Students are expected not to question, disagree, argue, or challenge their teacher's viewpoints.

Students address their teachers in a polite and formal way. They use titles such as: "Sir, Mam, Mr., Mrs.,Dr., etc." Being in an informal classroom setting would make a student uncomfortable. Students also need to feel that they are respected by their teachers.

English Language Proficiency

Most Filipino students speak English well because they have had their basic background courses taught in English. But English is not the native language.

Some students may have difficulty expressing ideas in English. Filipino students read and write English better than they speak it.

Some students have distinct accents when speaking English.

Classroom Attitude

Students do not easily volunteer ideas, express opinions, or raise questions.

Filipino students are not very verbal, forward, or assertive and frank. They have a

tendency to be shy or quiet. They prefer writing things down. They avoid heavy discussions.

There is also the tendency to be submissive by agreeing, avoiding confrontations, changes and disturbances. Students want to have a smooth interpersonal relationship with others.

Personal Values

Students like to be given compliments, incentives, encouragement, recognition, and acceptance.

They like those teachers who show interest in their progress and relate to them in a warm and personal way.

Be careful of the comments and jokes made in class. They might be more insulting than funny.

Others

Students prefer essay type of questions/examinations or a combination of objective and essay.

They are used to lecture type of interaction. Filipinos can adapt to their environment easily.

Sense of Self and Space

Filipinos are very private and do not open up easily to other people.

They like to work on their own.

They do not volunteer information.

They function well in situations when they are given their own space, independence.

Filipinos are mostly sensitive and emotional human beings.

Communication and Language

Talalog is the national language, but English (which is the medium of instruction) is frequently used especially in the business, education and the mass media.

There also exists urban and rural slangs and jargons; also regional dialects.

For Filipinos, their written English is better than their spoken English.

Dress and Appearance

Differences exist between urban and rural attire. Urban styles are Western influenced, while rural people wear simple work clothes.

Most business settings require certain dress codes.

Filipinos are conscious of their physical appearance and dressing up well relates to one's status and good family breeding.

Food and Eating Habits

Regional differences are evident even in food.

Rice is the staple food; food is generally not that spicy; people are fond of sweets for dessert.

People generally use forks and spoons but some still prefer using their hands.

"Burping" is not a sign of being disrespectful but that one had a very fine meal.

Some don't eat meat due to religious beliefs.

Time and Time Consciousness

The Philippines is known for "Filipino time" - not being punctual.

Most people try to be more punctual when it comes to business meetings.

"Manana" is commonly practiced.

Relationships

Strong family ties are evident among Filipinos.

A nuclear family may even include the grandparents, cousins, uncles, etc. and other immediate relatives and also what they call "adopted relatives".

Men/women or boy/girl relationships are also geared towards the family.

Fixed marriages are not prevalent but in some regions parents still engage in this set-up.

Pre- and extra-marital activities and living-in are taboo.

Long engagements are still preferred.

Manifestations of affection in public is considered inappropriate.

Values and Norms

They respect elders or any authority figure.

People are expected to behave in particular ways in relation to their economic status, profession or educational accomplishment.

Beliefs and Attitudes

Filipinos are predominantly Catholics in religion.

Religious authorities or superiors play a big role in influencing decision making.

There also exist beliefs in the supernatural, in superstitions, fairies, dwarves, gods and goddesses.

Mental Process and Learning

Early in life, Filipino children are taught by their parents basic readiness skills needed in school. Depending on the subject matter, teachers engage in either drill and practice or rote memorization. Individualized learning dominates the classroom setting encouraging the students to work on particular tasks at their own pace/level. As students go to higher levels of education, teachers encourage students to engage more independent and creative thinking.

Work Habits and Practices

They respect their superiors and tend to obey and follow them even if it means doing something they "don't readily believe in or agree with."

Some don't mind working extra hours or working late or even working during the weekends just so they could accomplish a particular task.

Most prefer the onset of new technology in the workplace while others still prefer manually operated or less sophisticated equipment. Changes are not easy to deal with in routine activities.

Nepotism is evident and payment is expected for favors especially in conducting business deals; loyalty to job is evident especially in the educational system.

The work place serves as a social arena.

Organizations often plan social events.

FINALLY

It is very important to validate the "Culturefax" by the means at our disposal. It is important for the statements or hypotheses to be valuable, and for the recommendations to be useful. With this in mind, this study and prospective publications are being presented to scholars of international education at several professional meetings to provide additional insight into the process for generating the statements and for assessing the merit of the product. The observations will then become an additional and very important aspect of the research "triangulation".

Your comments and ideas are most welcome and will be considered in the revision of the process and the resultant "Culturefax".

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMMENTS

CULTUREFAX

David G. Gueulette
L.E.P.S.
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb IL 60115

815-753-0464
FAX 815-753-2100